

TOWN OF NEWTON
Anti-Bullying / Harassment Policy

Adopted 11/10/14

PURPOSE:

The Town of Newton, NH recognizes that all town property must be physically and emotionally safe and secure for all officials, employees and the public. The Town of Newton prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence.

The scope of this policy includes the prohibition of every form of bullying, harassment, and cyberbullying/harassment. This also includes bullying or harassment that violates other established town policies including but not limited to sexual harassment and anti-discrimination.

Bullying or harassment, like other forms of aggressive and violent behaviors, interferes with the function of conducting town business. All town officials, employees, volunteers, and the public, when on town property, are expected to refuse to tolerate bullying and harassment and to demonstrate behavior that is respectful and civil.

POLICY:

Bullying or harassment, either implied or direct, is prohibited at Town of Newton properties and sponsored events. Such conduct by a Newton employee, volunteer, elected official or a member of the public will not be tolerated. Anyone who exhibits violent behavior may be subject to criminal prosecution and employees shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal.

Bullying or harassment by elected officials or employees may result in criminal prosecution or an administrative review / hearing with the Board of Selectmen. The Town of Newton Department Heads will investigate all complaints filed and will also investigate any possible violation of this policy of which they are made aware. Retaliation against a person who makes a complaint regarding violent behavior or threats of violence made to him/her is also prohibited.

DEFINITIONS:

"Bullying" / "Harassment" means a single significant incident or a pattern of incidents involving a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another person which:

- (1) Physically harms a person or damages the person's property;
- (2) Causes emotional distress to a person;
- (3) Interferes with a person's participation or opportunity to participate in or benefit from the Town's programs or activities;
- (4) Creates a hostile work environment; or
- (5) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the Town's business.

REPORTING ACTS OF “BULLYING” / “HARASSMENT”:

Any person who is the target of bullying or harassment or has witnessed such an incident is strongly encouraged to report the matter in writing to their department head or the Town Administrator. Any person aware of retaliation against anyone who has reported an infraction of this policy should also file a written report with their department head or the Town Administrator.

Newton Safety Committee Form – “I” will be used for incident reporting.

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION:

Reported acts of “Bullying” / “Harassment” will be investigated immediately.

In appropriate circumstances, the Town will inform the reporting individual of the results of the employee and the investigation but may need to disclose results in appropriate circumstances; for example, in order to protect individual safety. The Town of Newton will not tolerate retaliation against any employee who reports workplace violence.

TRAINING / INSTRUCTION:

The Town of Newton shall be responsible for ensuring that all elected officials, employees, including managers, supervisors, and volunteers etc., are provided training and instruction on general workplace behavior. Department Heads shall be responsible for ensuring this training is provided.

Training / instruction shall be provided to all current employees when the policy is first implemented and to all newly hired employees or elected officials.

Approved: 11/10/14